
Meeting	Housing and Community Safety Policy and Scrutiny Committee
Date	2 November 2020
Present	Councillors Fenton (Chair), Pavlovic (Vice-Chair), Baker, Mason and Musson
Apologies	Councillors Vassie and Wells

1. Declarations of Interest

Members were asked to declare, at this point in the meeting, any personal interests not included on the Register of Interests or any prejudicial or discloseable pecuniary interest that they might have in respect of the business on the agenda.

Councillor Mason declared a pecuniary interest as he worked as a Magistrate.

2. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the previous meeting of the committee held on 24 February 2020 be approved and signed as a correct record.

3. Public Participation

It was reported that there had been no registrations to speak under the Council's Public Participation Scheme.

4. Community Safety During COVID

The Committee were joined by council officers and Superintendent Lindsey Butterfield, who each outlined the impact COVID-19 had had on services in their area, this included Community Safety, Public Protection, Housing, and Policing in York. It was outlined that closer partnership working, new approaches, and new pieces of technology had allowed services to adapt and continue throughout the pandemic, even with challenges such as the closing of the courts and the regular changes in government legislation.

Members discussed police activity during lockdown in relation to areas such as County Lines. It was confirmed that in the early stage

of lockdown demand on the police had reduced and with more people at home there had been more opportunities for information gathering. With access to the courts restricted, members also discussed what actions had been taken to tackle anti-social behaviour, noting the use of things such as Acceptable Behaviour Contracts.

Officers and members highlighted the positive compliance of licensed premises and business' in the city more widely to COVID-19 restrictions. Concerns were raised however, regarding the access of alcohol by minors, it was confirmed that this was not an issue in any large volume identified by the police, but that they would continue to monitor.

Public safety was discussed with a large uptake of cycling and the return to more regular amounts of traffic since the end of the first lockdown, maintaining safety for those using roads throughout York was highlighted as an important. The safety of individuals exercising after work was also raised and considered, in light of shorter daylight hours as winter approaches, and new COVID-19 restrictions preventing groups from different households exercising in public spaces together, the importance of keeping individuals leaving there home for things such as walks or runs was noted as a priority.

Members enquired about the access to emergency accommodation and if lockdown had impacted the access for rough sleepers. It was confirmed that the council was continuing to run its Everybody In initiative, but some people that had accessed emergency accommodation had returned to sleeping on the streets. Officers confirmed that places remained available and they would continue to offer these places to rough sleepers, this included the use of a brand new hostel James House and the continued use currently of Ordinance Lane.

Members were also provided with an update on the role that COVID marshals would play, noting that they would not hold an enforcement role, but instead would aim to encourage compliance with COVID-19 guidelines. Members also questioned the best way for residents to report concerns and it was highlighted they could call 101 or 01904 551555.

Resolved:

- i. Update was noted.

Reason: To ensure the Committee remain updated in relation to Community Safety during the COVID-19 pandemic.

5. Work Plan

Members considered the Committee's work plan and agreed that the proposed Committee meeting in December would be brought forward to allow the Committee to provide pre-decision scrutiny on Council Housing Retrofitting prior to a decision being taken by the Executive on 15 December 2020.

Resolved:

- i. The Committee's work plan was noted.

Councillor S Fenton, Chair

[The meeting started at 5.30 pm and finished at 7.22 pm].